kms. of country's major cities has dropped by 15 percent or more in less than a year and that the flood prone areas have doubled from 25 million hectare in 1960's to 59 million hectare now;

(b) if so, what is the reaction of the Government with regard to the observations of the Worldwatch Institute's report;

(c) what is the performance of the National Wasteland Development Board in achieving the targets since its establishment in 1985;

(d) which of the State Governments have shown unsatisfactory performance in enforcing the Forest Conservation Act of 1980; and

(e) whether Government propose to re-define Land use Policy and Forest and Environment Act; if so, what steps have been taken by Government in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) No. Sir. According to the Worldwatch Institute's Report entitled "State of the World" 1988, it has been reported about India that 39 percent of India's land is degraded The same report, at another place, mentions that half the country's land mass is degraded land.

Regarding the forest cover within 100 kms. of country's major cities, it has been mentioned that, this has dropped by 15 per cent or more in less than a decade.

Rearding the flood prone areas the report has indicated that the estimated flood prone area is 59 million had more than double of 25 million has of late sixties.

(b) The main thrust of the report is to highlight the environmental threats and the evidence of environmental degradation. The Government of India are already aware of the problems and have taken effective measures. In fact the report has praised the Prime Minister of India for elevating reforestation to the level of national crusade.

(c) The performance of National Wastelands Development Board in achieving the afforestation targets since its establishment is as under:

(in million hectares)

Yezr	Afforesation/Tree Planting Target	Achievement
1985-86 . .	1·65	1·51
1986-87 . .	1.71	1·76
1987-88 . .	1.79	1·77
1988-89 . .	2·00 (upto September, 1988)	1·35

(d) Although there are some cases of violation of the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980 in some States. no State has shown unsatisfactory performance in enforcing the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

(e) The land use policy is already fined. The environment and forest legislations are reviewed from time to time and amended when necessary.

Rate of Inflation

2526. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA:

SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the percentage of rise in the rate of inflation during the first seven months of the current financial year as against the corresponding period in the last financial year;

(b) what is the rise in the Price Index since the presentation of 1988-89 Budget (till date); and

(c) what are the main factors identified by Government for the unchecked rise in inflation and Price Index and what measures are contemplated by Government to contain the continued acceleration in the rate of inflation which is weakening the country's economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AFFAIRS IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO): (a) The annual rate of inflation during the first seven months of the current financial year (1988-89) in terms of Wholesale Price Index (1970-71=100) measured on a point to point basis decreased from 10.6 per cent (end March, 1988) to 6.6 per cent (end October, 1988) as against an increase from 5.3 per cent to 7.3 per cent in the corresponding period last year (1987-88).

(b) The Wholesale Price Index rose from 418 4 on 26th March, 1988 to 437.5 on 12th November, 1988 (latest available) during the current financial year.

(c) The increase in Price Index has been mainly due to normal seasonal factors. The annual rate of inflation has actually come down from 10.6 per cent at the end of March to 6 per cent on 12th November, 1988.

The Government has been keeping a close watch on the price situation and has taken measures to keep them under check. These include strengthening of the Public Distribution System, import of essential commodities, strict economy in Government expenditure, mopping up excess liquidity in the economy and measures to encourage higher production.

Revenue loss to Government due to suspension of Jackpot pool

2527. SHRI T. CHANDRASEKHAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Delhi Race Club has suspended the Jackpot pool and three Leg Pool recently;

(b) if so, what are the reasons for the closures of these pools now which were in operation for the last twenty years;

(c) whether Government are aware of huge revenue loss suffered due to the suspension of these pools; and

(d) by when Delhi Race Club is going to continue these pools again?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

Depletion of forest area by various industries

2528. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) what is the total forest area depleted in the country between the period 1978-88 due to the setting up of various industries, industrywise;

(b) what is the area replanted by these industries during the above period: and

(c) whether any action has been taken against any industry for any violation in this regard, if so, what are the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI Z. R. ANSARI): (a) and (b) No survey has been carried out to assess the total forest area depleted or replanted by various industries during the period 1978 to 1988

(c) The information is being collected and will be laid on the table of the House.